

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02  
SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03 AID-05 IO-13 /090 W  
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R 072054Z OCT 77  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0041  
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
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AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 29609

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: FR, XF, US, UR  
SUBJ: FRENCH REACT POSITIVELY TO RECENT US MIDDLE EAST  
INITIATIVES

BEGIN SUMMARY: RECENT US INITIATIVES IN THE SEARCH FOR  
A MIDDLE EAST PEACE SETTLEMENT HAVE RECEIVED MAJOR  
AND GENERALLY FAVORABLE ATTENTION. THE OFFICIAL RE-  
ACTION HAS BEEN UNIVERSALLY FAVORABLE, TINGED PERHAPS  
WITH A CERTAIN SMUGNESS THAT THE US NOW SEEMS TO BE  
MOVING TOWARDS POSITION FRANCE HAS LONG SUPPORTED.  
FRENCH OFFICIALS ALSO SEEM IN SOME DOUBT AS TO WHERE THE  
RECENT SPATE OF STATEMENTS AND DECLARATIONS HAS BROUGHT  
THE PEACE PROCESS. END SUMMARY.

1. RECENT US MOVES AIMED AT RECONVENING OF THE GENEVA  
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ME PEACE CONFERENCE HAVE RECEIVED WIDESPREAD ATTENTION  
IN THE FRENCH MEDIA FOCUSED ON THE QUICKENING OF US  
ACTIVITY AND THE EVOLUTION OF US POLICY TOWARDS A ROLE  
FOR THE PALESTINIANS AT GENEVA. THE PRESIDENT'S  
SEPTEMBER 29 PRESS CONFERENCE, THE JOINT US-SOVIET  
DECLARATION, THE ISRAELI-US JOINT STATEMENT, AND THE  
PRESIDENT'S UNGA ADDRESS HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO EXTEN-

SIVE ANALYSIS. DESPITE A TENDENCY TO EXAGGERATE (THE SOVIET-US DECLARATION AS THE WORST SETBACK FOR ISRAEL SINCE 1973 AND THE US-ISRAELI STATEMENT AS A RETREAT BY THE ADMINISTRATION IN THE FACE OF PRESSURE BY PRO-ISRAELI GROUPS) THE COVERAGE HAS BEEN BALANCED AND GENERALLY FAVORABLE. THERE WAS ALSO SOME CROWING THAT THE US IS FINALLY COMING AROUND TO THE REALISTIC POSITION LONG ADVOCATED BY FRANCE.

2. US MOVES, AND PARTICULARLY THE SOVIET-US DECLARATION, HAVE GOTTEN UNQUALIFIED OFFICIAL APPROVAL. IN A MAJOR TELEVISED ADDRESS THE EVENING OF OCTOBER 6, PRIME MINISTER BARRE SAID "WE ARE SATISFIED TO SEE THAT THE TWO CO-PRESIDENTS OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO REACH AGREEMENT ON RELAUNCHING THE CONFERENCE. I THINK IT IS NECESSARY TO BE OPTIMISTIC ON THIS SUBJECT BECAUSE IF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE FAILS, THE CONSEQUENCES WILL BE GRAVE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST."

3. BARRE ALSO TALKED OF HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER ON THE MIDDLE EAST WHICH HE NOTED TOOK PLACE BEFORE THE SOVIET-US DECLARATION. "IT SEEMS, "HE SAID, "THAT THERE HAS BEEN A NOTICEABLE EVOLUTION IN THE US POSITION(TOWARDS THE PALESTINIANS) AND IN THIS REGARD THE EVOLUTION HAS BEEN IN THE DIRECTION OF POSITIONS WHICH FRANCE HAS ALWAYS SUPPORTED."  
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4. THE REACTION OF QUAI OFFICIALS HAS BEEN SIMILARLY POSITIVE (AS WE UNDERSTAND WAS THAT OF FONMIN GUIRINGAUD IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH THE SECRETARY). THE DIRECTOR OF MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS CERLES--TO WHOM WE GAVE THE TEXT OF THE US-SOVIET DECLARATION BEFORE ITS PUBLICATION--WAS VERY PLEASED AND TERMED IT AN IMPORTANT AND POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT. THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR LEVANT AFFAIRS--THE WORKING LEVEL OFFICIAL CLOSEST TO THE ARAB-ISRAELI PROBLEM--SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THE US-SOVIET DECLARATION COULD RESULT IN A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH. HE ALSO SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE QUAI WERE SOMEWHAT PUZZLED AS TO THE REAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MULTIPLE STATEMENTS WHICH HAD BEEN MADE IN THE LAST WEEK AND WONDERED TO WHAT EXTENT THE SITUATION HAD IN FACT EVOLVED TOWARDS THE RECONVENING OF A GENEVA CONFERENCE WITH SOME PROSPECTS OF SUCCESS.  
HARTMAN

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## Message Attributes

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